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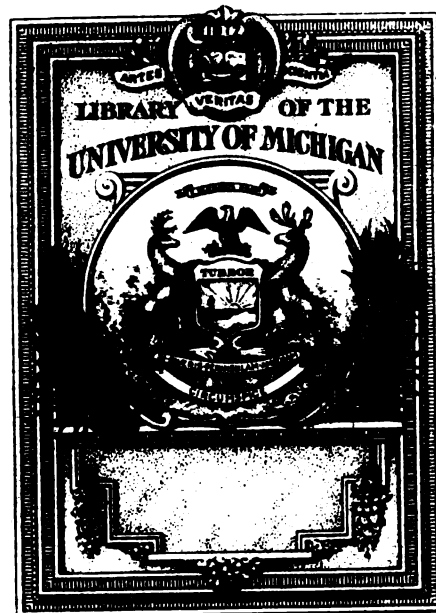
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The imperial constantinian Order of St. George

Dēmētriōs
Rhodokanakēs



THE GIFT OF
Mrs. Cornelius Steketee
Hulst

3

THE IMPERIAL CONSTANTINIAN
ORDER OF ST. GEORGE.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET



Insignia of the Imperial Constantinian Order of St. George.

1-Knights Grand Cross. 2-Knights. 3-Serving Knights.

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THE IMPERIAL CONSTANTINIAN
ORDER OF ST. GEORGE.

A REVIEW OF MODERN IMPOSTURES

AND

A SKETCH OF ITS TRUE HISTORY.

BY

HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE RHODOCANAKIS.

Rhodokanakis, Dēmētrios

IN TWO PARTS.



LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

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96.
Mrs. Cornelius C. Ketchum Hulet
4-17-1918

In whom it may concern:

(p. 221) as 1192 > for

The date is given of the promulgation of Statutes
remodelling or instituting the Imperial Constantinian
Order of St. George, by Emperor Isaac II Angelus,
is earlier than that of the foundation of the Golden
Fleece by the Burgundian Dukes or the Order of the
Garter by Edward III. Were the later orders ^{controversy}
yet the ^{historical}
twins of the earlier? This order has not only ^{ty.}

^{of the latter}
star, which I take it is the oldest and most
significant part of the decoration, but also a
^{chain}
collar and pendant. At what date were these
adopted? The chain and the pendant George
were adopted for the Order of the Garter in the
reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII — the point is,
~~was~~ this chain and pendant earlier? a question
that has been raised, and that is not settled, as
relates to the date of the rise of the ^{allegory of the} dragon combat
of St. George and its use as a religious symbol.

Dr. Matzke, who is our best student of the literature
of that subject, knows no literary version of the story
earlier than XIII century, given in the Russian work by
Vasilievsky

KIS.
gan



9.
ms. Caroline, Stehette. Huh +
4-17-1908

TO THE READER.

ALTHOUGH the origin of the present controversy sprang up in an *esoteric* periodical, yet the question involved seemed to be of sufficient historical importance, to justify a more extended publicity.

RHODOCANAKIS.
gan

WEST MANSION,
WEST WORTHING, SUSSEX:
September 12, 1870.

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THE IMPERIAL CONSTANTINIAN
ORDER OF ST. GEORGE.

PART I.
IMPOSTURES.

CHAPTER I.

THE 'RED CROSS OF ROME AND CONSTANTINE.'

MY attention having been directed to a protracted discussion on the subject of the Imperial Constantinian Order of St. George, and its surreptitiously appropriated insignia, I now feel it incumbent on me, to vindicate the integrity of that Order, and to point out its true history, and the legitimate destination of its Grand Mastership. But before proceeding to do so, it will be necessary to review the various statements, and arguments employed by the promoters of this attempted imposture, and their refutation by its opponents. Among the former, however, we must excuse those who, through carelessness, or an inaptitude for historical inquiry, have allowed themselves to be exposed to a certain responsibility, by lending the weight of their honourable names, to support so unworthy a scheme; but who, nevertheless, I feel assured, will ultimately repudiate the injurious connection, cast aside these usurped insignia, and leave the original author of the attempted deception, to the well-merited contempt of honest men.

In the year 1868, appeared a small work¹ entitled, 'General Statutes

¹ London: G. Kenning, 1868.

of the Imperial, Ecclesiastical, and Military Order of Knights of the Red Cross of Rome and Constantine ;' to which is added a 'Sketch of the History of the Red Cross Order,' and engravings of its 'jewels and regalia.'

This remarkable production, as stated on the title-page, is 'published under the authority of the "Grand Imperial Council," by Sir Knight Robert Wentworth Little, Grand Recorder ;' and on the next page appears a list of the members of the 'Grand Imperial Council,' headed by, 'The Right Hon. the Lord Kenlis, Most Illustrious Grand Sovereign.'

In the 'Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror,' of January 10, 1869, a correspondent writes, with reference to the above Statutes, and designation of the Order—'I¹ had thought that a similarity of titles was probably their only claim and relationship with the public Order of the same name in the Grand Duchy of Parma, the Sicilies and Turkey. But in the appendix of the Statutes I find that the decorations of the present public Orders . . . are given as those of the Masonic Order to which these Statutes relate.'

A reference to 'The Historical Sketch,'² informs us that the history of the Order is carried from its original foundation, 'to the resignation' of the Grandmastership, 'by Andrew Angelus Flavius Comnenus,' who 'pretended to assign his hereditary rights to Francis Farnese, the then (1699) reigning Duke of Parma . . . and we are in all probability indebted to the learned Abbé (Giustiniani) who was long attached to the Venetian embassy in London (?) for the Existence of the Order in England . . . though we are unable to say, positively, when the Order was restricted to Freemasons.'

Briefly alluding to the extinction of the male line of the Farnese family, in 1713, the transfer of the Order to Naples, and the subsequent claim of Marie-Louise, in the present century, which led to the establishment of the Order, likewise, in Her Imperial Highness's principality, 'Some information,' justly observes 'Lupus,' 'would be desirable, as to the existence in England, of any Chapter of the original

¹ 'Lupus.'

² Statutes, &c. p. 27.

Order of Constantine,' and he adds, 'I feel that something is due to the public Orders which they (the Masonic) improperly imitate.'

This moderate requirement is met by R. W. L.,¹ who, on the gratuitous assumption, as a fundamental axiom, that the Abbé Giustiniani really did remove the seat of the Order to England, and had any power to do so, seems to divert attention from the true issue, and in a laboured and factitious argument, discusses the legality of the sale of the original Order to the Duke of Parma, and, in support of his false premises, appeals to the social respectability of the late W. R. Wright, who does not, however, fit the occasion; and to the circumstance, that the late Duke of Sussex wore on certain occasions, a suggestive red-cross decoration of similar design. 'The English branch, whose existence I have now traced back for nearly 110 years, approximating the period of the Abbé Giustiniani's decease, in 1735,' continues the same writer. But, in truth, no such success has attended the effort, and the authoritative reference to irrelevant matter, tends only to multiply the tortuosities of the imposture, and to betray design, where we had hoped only to find the unremunerative labours of 'strenuous idleness.'

Still persistent in the evident belief, that the sources of historical truth are sealed to the outer world, the same writer proceeds to say, under the conveniently supplied patronage of a noble name, that in Scotland were permitted 'Encampments or Chapters of . . . Knights of the Red Cross of Constantine,' and he adds, 'I hope that enough has been said to demonstrate that the reorganised Grand Council of England, now held under Lord Kenlis, was not the first to introduce the Masonic element into the ceremonies of the Red Cross Order.'

The reader cannot fail to observe the transposition of facts, and the chronological inversion in the last sentence; and it is well to bear in mind the assertion, that Lord K. was 'not the first to introduce the Masonic element,' with the statement made by the author of the work already quoted,² that it is impossible to say 'when the Order was restricted to Freemasons.'

¹ *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, Jan. 23, 1869.

² *Statutes, &c.* p. 27.

In combating these fallacies, another correspondent¹ starts with the proposition that the Order of Constantine has 'never had any connection whatever with Masonry.' But he subsequently falls into the error of ascribing the Grandmastership of that Order to the present King of Italy; yet, farther on, he successfully rejects the fallacy of supposing that the Abbé Giustiniani (ante 1735) ever, as asserted by 'R. W. L.,' conferred the public Order of Constantine on any Freemasons, far less with the power to perpetuate it, the effect of which would evidently have been, to destroy ultimately the Order, like a circle in the water, by its own expansion. But such inconsiderate statements must be expected, unless there be a very considerable amount of talent to anticipate, and provide for the objections, which must necessarily arise, where the deception attempted, involves political and historical questions of fact.

'R. W. L.'² now snatches at the mention of Victor Emmanuel, and begins apparently to shift from his original position, and to misquote 'Lupus's' clear meaning, by substituting the name 'Constantine' for 'Red Cross' and 'Chivalric.' He then mentions the scheme of a member of the Order in question, for a coalition with the King of Naples, and to 'eliminate all Masonic allusions from the ceremonies.'

Thus the tale of the Order, under which the King of Naples inherited the *quasi* Grandmastership is now acknowledged to have been legal, although at page 27 of the Statutes it is declared to have been 'pretended,' and R. W. L. had endorsed the same *dictum* in an earlier letter.³

In reply to a prior remark by 'Lupus,'⁴ who stated his conviction that there was 'no evidence whatever that there is anything else than a Masonic element, nor a shadow of proof that there ever was an institution in this country of the original Order of Constantine, H. J. W.,⁵ in defence of the obnoxious 'Statutes' promulgated in 1868, makes the extraordinary admission: 'On ordinary chivalric grounds we say nothing

¹ *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, Feb. 6, 1869.

² *Ibid.* Feb. 20, 1869.

³ *Ibid.* Jan. 23.

⁴ *Ibid.* Feb. 6.

⁵ *Ibid.* Feb. 27.

of . . . the Red Cross of Rome and Constantine, or the Knights of the Temple, because neither, we believe, can prove their regular and unbroken succession from the original Orders. All we know is, that for upwards of a century these degrees have been worked under the wing of Freemasonry; but as to when the union occurred, or how it was consummated we are at a loss either to prove or imagine.' The Knights of the Red Cross, 'seem to have flourished both as an Order of Knighthood and as a Masonic degree at one and the same time.' But here again comes the confusion of ideas, as the writer adds, 'Hence the members of the Red Cross of Constantine can say that their Order is not only Masonic, as with the Anglican branch, but also Chivalric, so much as even to boast of having claimants for its Grandmastership in the Emperor of the French, the ex-King of Naples, and even King Victor Emmanuel, according to Lupus.' The late Duke of Sussex and Lord Kenlis are again paraded as the stalking-horses, of the spurious Order, and the reader is referred to 'the admirable history inserted in the Statutes,' a critical opinion quite in harmony with the writer's general ideas on the subject.

'Lupus' now points out that, 'we are now told that the Masonic Red Cross Institution does not boast any connection with the Parmese Neapolitan Order,' and that therefore, 'the question is reduced to the power and acts of the Abbé Giustiniani and any evidence of them.'

At this stage of the discussion¹ is given another claim, which had been currently reported in the newspapers, viz., that of 'Antonio Lascari-Comneno,' 'Grand Duke of Epirus,' &c., 'by right of hereditary transmission, Grand Master of the Supreme Constantinian Order of the Knights of St. George.' Against this, we have the protest of The Prince Rhodocanakis.²

A few months later³ another correspondent indignantly remarks, 'The Supreme Council has endeavoured in every possible way to

¹ *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, May 1, 1869.

² *The Court Journal, The Court Circular, &c.* April 17, 1869, and *Freemasons' Magazine and*

Masonic Mirror, May 1, 1869.
³ *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, Aug. 28, 1869.

oppose the Red Cross Order,' 'but such men as Bros. Hughan, Little, and others of a like calibre, will never be extinguished by the thunder and small beer of any clique!'

A new writer now comes on the scene,¹ and expresses his opinion freely, on the promoters of the imposture. 'Attempts,' says he, 'have been made to establish as a Masonic degree, or in connection with Freemasonry, the Order of the Red Cross of Rome and Constantine . . . and I am not a little surprised to find, what appears to me a series of gross deceptions, attempted to be practised on Englishmen. . . . May I suggest to those who are interested in foisting this spurious Masonic Order upon the public, before they attempt to maintain the ground they have taken, although they appear by the correspondence to have been shifting about, whilst promulgating the Order as legitimate' 'to ascertain whether Waller Rodwell Wright . . . was not a self-delusionist, and fancied falsehood to be truth.' But the gentleman referred to, after all, can scarcely be charged with the promulgation of the spurious statutes.

The historical accuracy of R. W. L. is now ² impeached by another correspondent (Charles Fitzgerald Matier), who at the same time claims to have identified him 'with the author and founder, or at least the chief corner-stone, of the Masonic order which has usurped the title which it assumes;' and commenting on the 'ridiculous absurdity of the whole thing,' he continues, 'As, however, Bro. Little has mixed up with his fiction certain facts mentioned in standard works of history, I have considered it my duty to prove the utter fallacy of his historical statements.'

It would be tedious to recapitulate the whole of these corrections, which are patent to all, and to expose errors, certainly not such as we should expect of the founder of an institution; and we are not a little surprised that Waller Rodwell Wright, the reputed 'scholar,' should have been implicated in such blunders.

R. W. L., following up his previous communications, proceeds to

¹ *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, Feb. 12, 1870.

² *Ibid.* March 19, 1870.

historical grounds untrodden by Gibbon, repeats the story of the vision of Constantine, and, quite overlooking Licinius, introduces to us 'the power of Maxentius,' 'the Viceroy Eusebius,' &c.; and finally informs us that the 'duties' of the generals of the Order in question 'are chiefly symbolic.'

Another historical scholar, and who is also a Knight of Constantine, pursues the same course, and adds the weight of heraldry to the argument. 'As this degree,' he observes, 'has attracted great attention of late years both in Europe and America, it may be right to state that it was one of those conferred under the Ancient York Rite. The seal of Heredom Templars bears the arms of King Arthur, the reputed grandson of Constantine!'

Such deep research amongst the Romances of the Round Table, is creditable to the genealogist, and proves that his knowledge of feudal heraldry, is quite on a par with his acquirements in Byzantine history.

But R. W. L., quite overlooking his own sarcasm on 'Lupus,' assumed desire, to raise an 'international question,' at length promises us a report of, 'the conference between Bro. Edward Busher and myself, on the one hand, and His Excellency Count Maffei, Italian Chargé d'Affaires, on the other, respecting the Italian Order and the Anglican branch, which is now the only legitimate representative of the Order in the world, the King of Italy having determined not to confer it, nor to permit any of his subjects to revive it under any pretence whatever. . . . A person claiming to be one of the Lascaris asserts his claim, but as one of the public Orders of the Two Sicilies it is now merged in the Kingdom of Italy, and it follows that Victor Emmanuel, as the Supreme King, is now the only lawful successor of the Parmese branch!'

'There are also Greek pretenders,' continues R. W. L., 'but they have never been recognised since the death of the last of the Comneni.' Here we have a mass of contradictory statements, in the language of diplomacy, and a frank admission, that the promoters of the imposture, had even the audacity to attempt to compromise the Italian diplomatist, as an accessory after the fact, as will presently be seen.

The same writer further states, that the papers referring to the lodge were, on the application of Lord Kenlis to Lord Zetland, delivered to the Grand Council.

Probably the latter lord had no difficulty in surrendering the precious archives, and regarded them in the light of those printed notices, which are often slipped in under doors, to be returned when called for.

To the direct question put by 'Lupus,'¹ 'Is there any document in existence dating more than a few years ago² which allies the Masonic Red Cross degree with the Constantine name?' R. W. L. seems to appreciate the difficulty, and thus evades it: 'The most conclusive evidence on this point is naturally only to be found in the rituals of the Order, and these of course cannot be published!' In a long rambling statement, the latter brings in irrelevant matter, and under the feint of meeting his adversary's arguments, takes care only to run parallel with them, quoting an '*Histoire des Francs Maçons*' (Brussels, 1832), and a *quasi* summons, dated in 1810, bearing the signature of the original scapegoat 'Waller Rodwell Wright,' which is addressed to the 'celebrated (?) Sir Joseph Hippolyte da Costa,' also a reference to the seal of the spurious Order, namely, 'a double-headed eagle'—the symbol of the union of the Eastern and Western Empires under Constantine, and which is 'borne at the present time by the senators of the revived Order.'

'Lupus' replies,³ 'The *Histoire des Francs Maçons* . . . which has attained the venerable age of thirty-two years, probably refers to the same, or a similar order of Red Cross.' But R. W. L. says 'the order has been confirmed from time immemorial in Scottish Encampments of Templars.' Now 'how can this be true when . . . there was no encampment in Scotland before 1800! And if it belonged to Scotland of time immemorial, would not this be strong evidence that it was not founded in England by Giustiniani?'

'Lupus' then proceeds to expose the unfounded assumption, that an

¹ *The Freemason*, April 2, 1870.

² ? 1868.

³ *Ibid.* April 9, 1870.

empty box at Freemasons' Hall, ever contained ancient documents, as advanced by R. W. L., bearing on the antiquity of the use of the Constantinian name, in connection with the Masonic Red Cross degree, and furthermore points out, that the summons of 1810, does not identify itself with the Constantinian Order.

Unfortunately, the mysterious box that *ought* to have contained valuable proofs, did *not* contain them; and that sheet anchor, the Abbé Giustiniani, author of a book on chivalric orders full of blunders, 'neither explains the powers of Grand Crosses, to form such an order as that now imputed to him, but, what is more remarkable, he does not say *one word* about *his own* performance, in that respect, in England.'

Mr. W. J. Hughan rejects 'Lupus'' arguments, and 'sees clearly unequivocal evidence of the Order's connection with Freemasonry, during the latter part of the past century.'

'Lupus,' however, repeats his still unanswered query: 'Where is this evidence?' and proves that the Order called Constantinian, was not mentioned in Templar statutes thirty years back, and that 'the present Order is an invention, of not more than four years' standing, and is *not* identical with the purely Masonic Order, of which the Duke of Sussex was Grand Master,' and concludes by remarking, that Mr. Hughan 'carefully alludes only to the connection of the present scheme with Freemasonry, which nobody doubts!'

This is the pivot on which all these prevarications turn.

Mr. C. Fitzgerald Matier, follows on the side of 'Lupus,'¹ and insists that 'the Masonic Order, although purporting to be of very ancient origin, and derived from the Order of Constantine, in reality was invented scarcely more than fifty years ago; and that 'the ceremonial used in those times, differed exceedingly from that which was introduced at the so-called revival three or four years ago, under Lord Kenlis.' 'But,' he continues, 'when we are distinctly told by the Grand Recorder of the Anglican Order that it is the only legal representative

¹ *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, April 9, 1870.

of the Order of Constantine . . . it becomes the duty of every man, Mason or not, who knows the truth, to take up arms in defence of truth.'

We may pass over in silence, the moderate historical pretensions of Mr. W. G. Doric, who now steps in;¹ for the present object is, not to discuss literary merits, but to rescue an ancient chivalric Order, from an unprincipled appropriation—not to pause to unravel the tawdry fabric of perverted history, as such, but to trace the progress of error, on a *moral* question.

R. W. L., unabashed by his evident discomfiture, again comes forward, and retracing his steps, persistently refers, with an assumed confidence, to the 'Statutes of the Red Cross Order, which contain information'² that the opponents of the 'Order would do well to peruse, before again rushing against the facts of its history.'

R. W. L. also returns to the subject of the *conference* with Count Maffei, and somewhat rashly invites an inquiry, by reiterating his previous inferences. The Order of Constantine, he remarks, 'is no longer a public one,' and 'I have consulted various works on Chivalry and the Orders of Knighthood, and am unable to find any evidence that the Order has been conferred, except in Italy as a public Order, and in England as a Masonic degree, since 1699.' This writer seems to infer from the reticence of the Italian Count, that the latter's master not unreasonably ignored his own claims to the Order, and that it might lawfully be appropriated as an honorary waif; and that as the suspected founder of the spurious Order—Waller Rodwell Wright, a consular agent and the 'friend' of two Royal Dukes, likewise a 'Christian' and a 'scholar'³—had been silent on the subject of descendants of Constantine existing in the island of Chio, that silence was 'fatal to the latter's pretensions.'

Repeating the caution attributed to him by 'Lupus,' Mr. Hughan again breaks in on the principal disputants,⁴ with 'words of counsel

¹ *The Freemason*, April 16, 1870.

² London: G. Kenning, 1868.

³ *The Freemason*, April 23, 1870.

⁴ *Ibid.* April 23, 1870.

darkening knowledge.' 'Of late,' says he, 'the historical position of the Red Cross (?) has been called in question, by one of the Commissioners on behalf of the Grand Conclave of England.' He has no doubt that those promoters of the spurious Order, on whom he depends, 'will show the world that there is no deception in the case.' He reverts to the doubts expressed by 'Lupus,' and gives, or seems to give, as the unequivocal evidence, to which he alluded, 'A series of articles by Bro. R. W. Little.' Lastly, his struggle between conviction of the real truth, and a friendly desire to shield the blunder, results in the admission, that 'None of the Masonic chivalric degrees *have any other* origin than Masonic, and *that* after the revival of Freemasonry, A.D. 1717.' In other words, he finds unequivocal evidence in the writings of Mr. R. W. Little, that the 'Imperial, Ecclesiastical, and Military Order of Knights of the Red Cross of Rome and Constantine' is the true representative of the Imperial Byzantine Order of St. George, and that it is, at the same time, restricted at present to Masonry; while, on the other hand, he discovers that there is no Masonic chivalric degree or Order (for that is the meaning) of higher antiquity than A.D. 1717. Thus, on the one hand, he professes reliance on the foundation of the Order in England, by the Abbé Giustiniani, *ante* 1635; and, on the other, equal reliance on the fact, that there were no such Orders before 1717. But he recovers himself gradually, and proceeds to make the following sufficiently explicit admissions, presumably with the tacit consent of the promoters of the imposture.

'The Articles of 1813,' says he, 'do not say a word about Constantine; but as regards this . . . I leave it to my friend, Bro. Little, to answer; I only know that the Red Cross degree was that under H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex,' &c.

'The Masonic Order called Constantine, did not exist in the last century.'

Mr. Hughan now throws his authority (R. W. L.) over, honestly admits his suspicion of deception, and recognises the necessity of the Grand Recorder producing some *better* authority than he has yet done.

Following this, is a further admission on the part of R. W. L., which is thus acknowledged by 'Lupus':—'Bro. R. W. L.'s word is quite sufficient, that the ritual he possesses is in the handwriting of the well-known Mason, Bro. W. R. Wright . . . who had possibly, or even probably, compiled this ritual himself from a ritual of the old Masonic Red Cross Order, which was *not* called Constantine;' and this is the document—written within, probably, two years of 1811—which R. W. L. refers to, when he says, 'We now quote the words of an *old ritual*.'

Archæologists know what is implied by *old* under such circumstances.

But Count Maffei had been already referred to, and his explanation reveals the fact, that his Excellency supposed that when holding the celebrated conference with Messrs. R. W. Little and Edward Busher,¹ 'he was only receiving an application from a Masonic lodge, which is entitled the Red Cross of Constantine.'

At this concluding stage of the argument or discussion, R. W. L., i. e. the 'Very Illustrious Grand Recorder of the Imperial, Ecclesiastical, and Military Order of *Valiant* and *Noble*² Knights of the Red Cross of Rome and Constantine,' not only retracts what he had all along persistently maintained, but goes a step further, and in the face of his own published letters, assures us that he did not say so!

'I have on several occasions,' says he, 'stated that the Masonic Order of Constantine has never claimed connection with the (late) public Order belonging to the extinct Kingdom of the Two Sicilies; and as that Order has ceased to exist,' &c.

'It is well known that all Masonic Orders are based mainly upon

¹ *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, April 23, 1870.

² There is a *well-known comedy* which aptly satirizes the ambition, to adopt the style and titles of our masters; and in the hands of an able playwright, we might yet witness, on the stage, the nobility of the *desk and counter*, marshalled into *Esquedom*, under the banner of some noble, of lineage, unknown in the

feudal ages, although perhaps dating from that genealogical refuge for the destitute—the seventeenth century.

In this Utopian principality, of course the illustrious would dispense with the plunder of 'heraldic studios,' and adopt the armorial insignia of those great men who are revived in their persons!

³ *The Freemason*, May 28, 1870.

tradition preserved in their rituals, and not upon actual historical proofs ; and the same observation may be said to apply to the Red Cross Order,' &c.

'The theory that the Abbé Giustiniani perpetuated the Order is . . . purely speculative, and does not account for its introduction as a Masonic degree.'

'I am therefore quite content to accept the alternative which Lupus places before me, and to acknowledge that the Order *must now rely upon its Masonic acceptance only.*'

Any admission more humiliating to a man of right feeling, it is not possible to conceive, for R. W. L. owns to his identity, as the author whose name appears on the title-page of the statutes, &c., of the spurious Order, and who, along with its *quasi* Grand Master, must be held responsible for the deception ; and it is their imperative duty to reduce forthwith their present 'insignia,' and erase from their statutes the obnoxious passages, which have unfortunately raised the Order from the level of puerility, to the unenviable eminence of imposture—an imposture, too, be it remarked, previously practised, but with more apparent dignity, by the pretended last of the Angeli, who likewise never had any right to the 'Order,' as I shall proceed to show.

CHAPTER II.

THE 'ANZOLI' CLAIMS.

IT has been very much the custom, amongst historical writers, to quote intermediate authorities, instead of the original; and few think of referring to the Byzantine authors themselves, since Gibbon has stood the test of a century of searching criticism. But unfortunately for the public the Abbé Giustiniani has not been subjected to the latter ordeal, and, in consequence, his errors have been copied by subsequent writers, with a confidence quite surprising.

In his work¹ now before me, the Abbé gives a remarkable list of the succession of forty-two emperors and princes, who were Grand Masters of the Imperial Constantinian Order of St. George. But few of the names are known to history, and it does seem remarkable, that when a dignity is hereditary, and not the reward of public services, which latter are generally recompensed late in life, their imputed Grand Masters should startle statisticians, with a display of longevity,² notoriously at variance with all well-known authenticated records, of the average duration of life, amongst the nobility of the feudal ages, and without a parallel in any other history, since that of the Mosaic patriarchs.

But the truth is, 'Giovanni Andrea Angelo Flavio Comneno,' who figures as the forty-second, and last of this succession of Grand Masters, represented a family of which Du Cange gives the names only of six³ chiefs, under the heading, 'Angeli de Drivasto.'

¹ *Historie cronologiche dell' origine degl' Ordini militari e di tutte le religioni cavalleresche, &c.* In Venezia, 1692, in fo. (pp. 39-42).

² Forty-one lives in this roll are made to cover 2545 years, i.e. the added lives produce

that number of years.

³ From Michael Angelus, ob. 1465, to J. A. A. F. Comnennus, the sixth and last, who is reputed to have sold the Byzantine Order (Fam. Byz. pp. 212, 213).

The Giustinianian hypothesis is this, that amongst the many Byzantine families that took refuge, on the fall of Constantinople, in those islands of the Grecian Archipelago, held by the Venetians and Genoese, was that of the Angeli—subsequently settled in Italy, where (having, however, be it observed, been totally ignored and unmentioned, during the first century after their imputed immigration), in 1545, Pope Paul III. (Alexander Farnese) settled on Joannes Andreas Angelus, a pension of 100 golden ducats a month; and this liberality, so tardy, it may be thought, was imitated by Pope Julius III. (John-Maria del Monte), who added to the pension, a country-seat.

But the Angeli, we are taught to believe, finding it incumbent on them, to produce documentary evidence of their pretensions, substantially conserved the facts, that Constantine the Great was the founder of the Imperial Byzantine Order, and that Isaac Angelus, and Michael Palaeologus had attached the dignity of Grand Master exclusively to the family of the former, from which they claimed a lineal male descent; that these pretensions were duly registered at Rome, June 30, 1533, by Vasque de Ulloa; that Paul III. having examined these documents, and—being possibly an infallible authority in such matters—formally declared, that the Angeli de Drivasto were the veritable descendants of those Emperors, whom they asserted to be their ancestors; and that the right to confer the Order, founded by their ancestors, was hereditary in their family; that Julius III., in a Bull dated 1568, confirmed the authority of his predecessor; and that Urban VIII. (Maffeo Barberino), by another Bull, dated 1626, affirmed the same judgment.

It is a matter of history that, during the first century, after the fall of the Byzantine Empire, and when the detection of imposture would have been comparatively easy, the Palaeologi were fully recognised, while of the Angeli nothing was heard; and yet we are expected to believe that, immediately after the great calamity in question, in 1453, the Angeli 'formed the design of restoring the Constantinian Order;' while, even by the Abbé's own showing, they took no farther steps in the matter until 1533. But that they even thought of the Order, or perhaps even *then* knew of it, seems more than problematical; and the

reference is at variance with Giustiniani's observations elsewhere, that the Order, extinguished in Greece, remained dormant in the Empire.

But, on inquiry, it will be found, that no such documents are known to exist by the librarian of the Vatican, and presumably by no one else.

At length, the 'illustrious Joannes Andreas Angelus,' although twice married, finding himself without children, and having no relatives of the Angeli, decided to transfer the Grandmastership to another family, with which it might be perpetuated, by adoption; and, accordingly, the design was carried out, by a sale of the dignity to Francis Farnese.¹ Duke of Parma and Placentia, and his posterity.

The act of cession was said to have been dated at Venice, July 27, 1697, but its existence has not yet been ascertained.

On August 5, 1699, the Emperor of Germany, Leopold I., gave a diploma to the Duke of Parma, ratifying the renunciation and transference of the Grandmastership, made by Joannes Andreas Angelus. This Imperial edict was followed by an Apostolic Brief of Pope Innocent XII. (Antonio Pignatelli), dated October 24, 1699, by which the latter confirms and approves of the renunciation and transference; and this again, by another of Pope Clement XI. (John Francis Albani), dated April 20, 1701, confirming the approval.

Thus terminated an intrigue, remarkable in the history of popular deception, by which the historian already referred to,² and probably one of its promoters, was nominated a Grand Cross—not, indeed, as he would have us believe, of the true Byzantine Order, but of its *imitation*, concocted between the puppet Angelus himself, and the house of Farnése.

Between the pretended new Grand Master of the ancient Order—but, in truth, first Grand Master of a *new* Order—and the Pope, there existed a family relationship; while the Abbé Bernardus

¹ The Farnesian house of Parma owes its origin to Peter Aloysius Farnesius, illegitimate son of His Holiness Pope Paul III., who gave to him the three dukedoms of Parma, Placentia,

and Castro, and made him the first Duke of Parma and Placentia in 1545.

² Giustiniani.

Giustiniani was incapacitated by his illegitimacy,¹ from becoming a knight of the original Order. But under the plastic skill of these 'remodellers,' a power of unique conception was attributed to the Grand Master, who, in virtue of this authority, removed the disability of the Abbé's birth.

Against these acts, the representative of the Imperial Byzantine family protested, with such success as would be likely to attend the appeal of a member of the Greek Church, against the usurpation of a Romanist at the Papal Court.

But suppose, for the sake of argument, that we adopt the pretensions of 'Joannes Andreas Angelus Flavius Comnenus,' how then are we to account for the flagrant violation of the statutes of his own Order, which prohibited, and excluded any, but the lawful heirs of the Empire, from being Grand Masters; for, by narrowing the transmission to the family of the founder of the Order, and by adopting the Angelo-Comnenian family, none of the monarchs of other dynasties that succeeded, would have enjoyed the dignity of Grand Master—an inference diametrically opposed to facts.

The weakness of this Flavio-Angelo-Comnenian argument is, the assumption that there was a *family* Order in the Angelian family, by which it becomes necessary to show, that Constantine the Great was an *Angelus*, and that the last Constantine (XIII.) was not Grand Master.

But it might be much more to the purpose to show, that the Italian Angeli were no other than the ANZOLI of the same peninsula, who had no connection whatever with the Byzantine Empire, but

¹ *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, March 5, 1870. B. Giustiniani, youngest natural son of the Senator Leonardo Giustiniani and of his mistress Caterina Corbelli, author of *Historie cronologiche dell' origine degl' Ordini militari e di tutte le religioni cavalleresche, etc.*

Horace Walpole in his *Letters* relates that the Abbé Bernard Giustiniani wrote a panegyric in verse on the *Empress Queen*—'She rewarded him with a gold snuff-box set with diamonds, and a patent of *theologian*.

Finding the trade so lucrative, he wrote another on the *King of Prussia*, who sent him a horn box, telling him that he knew his vow of poverty would not let him touch gold; and that having no *theologians*, he had sent him a patent to be *Captain of Horse* in those very troops that he had commended so much in his verses! I am persuaded that the saving the gold and brilliants was not the *part* which pleased his Majesty the least.'

who might, in the course of time (as we see every day about us), allow a mere idle suggestion, to become a tradition, and a tradition, the foundation of a family history, to doubt which, when duly embalmed, would be considered akin to sacrilege.

The Constantinian Order of St. George was appropriated in name by the celebrated Emperor Charles V. 'L'Empereur Charles-Quint,' says M. Hermant,¹ 'voulut bien même se déclarer le Chef de cette auguste Milice, dont il donna l'Étendard à son fils naturel Dom Juan d'Autriche, lorsqu'il alla pour combattre contre les Infidèles, dans cette fameuse campagne qu'il fit en 1571, pendant laquelle il donna la bataille de Lépante. . . . Giustiniani ajoute que l'Électeur de Bavière, Ferdinand Marie, se déclara Protecteur de cet Ordre l'an 1667; que la République de Venise confirma l'an 1671, au Grand Maître, Ange Marie Comnène,' &c.

I have quoted from this author for convenience, on a matter of no importance, for his statements are in general of inferior authority, my object being simply to introduce the remark, that the ex-Duke of Parma and the ex-King of Naples, are the Grand Masters of the so-called 'revival' of Charles. The late King Ferdinand II. of Naples opened negotiations, just before his death, to amalgamate his Order with that held in the name of the Byzantine Empire, by The Prince Joannes Rhodocanakis (Joannes X.), a proposal which was declined.

It now remains for me to allude briefly to the recent claim, (so extensively circulated in various European publications) of 'Antonio Lascaris Comneno' to be considered 'the sole descendant, in a direct line, of the Eastern Emperors; and Perpetual Grand Master of the Supreme Constantinian Order of the Knights of St. George.'

This is one of those sensational proceedings which attract notice, from the brilliancy of the inventive talent displayed, but which must shrink from the cold touch of genealogical analysis.

It has already been met by a protest, from the true representative of the last reigning sovereign of the Byzantine Empire.

¹ *Histoire des Religions, ou Ordres militaires de l'Église, et des Ordres de Chevalerie, etc.*, à Rouen, MDCCXXVI. 2 vols. in 8vo., pp. 94, 95, Vol. II.

In conclusion, I cannot do better than quote the following passage, from Carolus du Fresne Dom. du Cange¹ :—‘Miram ac incredibilem quoad Graecanicas familias confusionem peperit attulitque Orientalis Imperii à Turcis invasio. Si qui enim ex nobilioribus, fortunae injuria, nulla pristinam recuperandi in posterum gloriam spe, in deplorandam prolapsi sunt calamitatem, extitere alii, qui etsi nobilitate aliqua olim revera fulserint, illustria ac indebita assumpsere nomina, et Ducum vel Principum imaginarias dignitates, tanquam ampla et à parentibus accepta provinciarum ac civitatum patrimonia possiderent, aut aliquando possedissent, pudore omni posito, sibi asseruere, intercedente interea nemine, qui vancs hosce titulos oppugnaret. Et sanè commiseratione longè potiùs digni sunt censendi, quàm ut iis qua premuntur, objiciatur calamitas, cùm nihil aequè deflendum, quàm inopia laborans vir nobilis, nec magis ridiculum, quàm egens gloriosus vel superbus, cui nullae suppetunt facultates, quibus generis decus, atque adeò ambitionem suam quodammodo fulciat ac tueatur :

“Commune hoc vitium est, híc vivimus ambitiosa
Paupertate omnes.”²

‘Iis accensendi omnino nobiles quidam Italici, ex Graecanicorum Angelorum, *uti volunt*, gente, ANZOLI vulgò cognominati, ex Drivastensi in Albania oppido exorti. Nam etsi fatendum eorum stemma nobilitatis quaedam praeferre insignia, illud tamen intolerandum videtur, quod Imperatoriarum familiarum cognominibus, ac dignitatum imaginariis titulis identidem pro libitu commutatis, quas vel ii, nec decessores unquam possedere, corvi instar Aesopici, alienis scilicet pennis, sese adornarint, *ructantes Semideùm propinquitates*, ut verbis utar Sidonii.³ Quinetiam eò venere frontis, ut Militaris perinde S. Georgii Ordinis Magistros supremos sese inscripserint Milites, Comites, Barones, Notarios, Tabelliones, Poëtas etiam, nobilitandi praeterea, *nothos legitimandi*, auream denique et argenteam cudendi monetam jus sibi arrogarint. Militarem porrò hunc Ordinem à Magno Constantino institutum volunt, cùm debellato Maxentio crucem in coelo conspexit ;

¹ *Familiae Augustae Byzantinae*. Lutetiae Parisiorum, MDCCC.LXXX. in folio, pp. 211, 212.

² Juvenal, *Sat.* 3.

³ Sidon. in Narbone, v. 254.

instauratum deinde ab Isaacio Angelo Imperatore, qui supremam Ordinis praerogativam Angelis Graecanicis ex se nascituris deinceps attribuerit. Quò ejusmodi naeniis posteris illudant, confinxere varia chartarum instrumenta, quae perspicuae falsitatis notam praeferunt,' &c.

'Jam verò ut Angelicum Drivastense stemma hîc describerem, haec causa potissimum impulit, quòd eorum interesse arbitrarer, qui illustres hosce dignitatum titulos fortasse legerint, quo jure a fundamento hos sibi adscripserint, statim agnoscant, ne tam facilè his se illudi nugis patiantur. Adde quod extitere in ea gente viri aliquot insignes, quorum sat perhonorifica habetur mentio apud scriptores, ut non omnino relinquatur intacta, &c. Primus igitur qui dubiae minùs fidei ex hac gente occurrat, est—I. MICHAEL ANGELUS, Nobilis Drivastensis,¹ qui obiit an. MCCCCLXV.: hujus filius fuit, II. ANDREAS ANGELUS, &c. III. PETRUS ANGELUS, Andreae filius, &c. IV. HIERONYMUS ANGELUS, "Princeps Thessaliae," &c. V. PETRUS ANGELUS FLAVIUS, "Princeps Ciliciae," qui ab Andrea Angelo patruo haeres dictus, eo nomine intercessit, &c. VI. JOANNES ANDREAS ANGELUS FLAVIUS COMNENUS, "Drivasti ac Dyrrachii Dux, Princeps Macedoniae et Moldaviae," &c., &c. Is est Flavius Angelus, qui Principum genealogias à se contextas Venetiis edi curavit an. MDCXXI. quarum plerasque ab ipso Adamo auspicatur, putidas adeò ac falsas, ut mirari liceat viri frontem ac audaciam,' &c., &c.

¹ Strange to say, the *founder* of the Angeli Drivastensis does not appear to have enjoyed, like his descendant of 1697, the title of 'Prince of Macedonia,' or, indeed, any other; and the first who seems to have had a Byzantine title was Hieronymus Angelus (1559), who is styled 'Prince of Thessaly and Grand Master' of the Constantinian Order. The titles again vary, until in the person of the sixth and last of the family, we have both 'Prince of Moldavia and Macedonia.' How remarkable that neither these titles nor pretensions should have been heard of during the first century after the fall

of Constantinople, and during a period when the Palaeologi were identified and acknowledged everywhere. Du Cange must be preferred to the interested Giustiniani; but the latter, for obvious reasons, has obtained more attention, and authors have been content to take their information at second-hand in this instance, for in all the absurd literature of the eighteenth century on the Orders of Knighthood, in which we find seriously recorded such 'Orders' as 'Du Chien et du Coq,' 'De la Table Ronde,' &c., Giustiniani stands as high authority. (See *Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser. VI. p. 80.)

PART II.

TRUE HISTORY OF THE ORDER.

CHAPTER I.

THE 'PALAEOLOGI' AND THE 'DUCAE-RHODOCANAKIDES.'

IT may be satisfactory to premise the following observations, on the Imperial Constantinian Order of St. George, by remarking, that the latter is held in *trust*, by the heir and representative of the last reigning sovereign of the Byzantine Empire, as its lawful guardian, and cannot be otherwise disposed of, save by the restoration of that Empire, when, indeed, an adverse decision of the people, would necessitate its surrender; but without prejudice to the inherent pretensions of the present representative's family, which would simply again lapse into abeyance, until some future revolution of Imperial fortune should once more revive them.

An ample explanation having already appeared before the public, of the title of the Imperial House of Rhodocanakis, to represent the Byzantine throne, and, consequently, the Grand Mastership of the Imperial Order in question, it will only be necessary to refer briefly to the circumstance that—in addition to their collateral claims through the Lacapenus, Phocas, Argyrus, Comnenus, Botaniates, Angelus, Lascaris, Vatatzes, Cantacuzenus, Palaeologus, and other Imperial Houses—the chief pretensions of this House rest, under the peculiar circumstances of the Empire, on the marriage, in 1614, of The Prince Demetrius Rhodocanakis with the Princess Theodora Palaeologina, sole heiress of her father, Theodore Palaeologus,

sixth titular or hereditary Emperor of the Byzantine Empire, and *de facto*, as well as *de jure*, Grand Master of the Imperial Constantinian Order of St. George. From this marriage is lineally descended The Prince Joannes Rhodocanakis (Born 11 May,¹ 1812, Married 19 February, 1840), of the castle of that name, in the Island of Chios, titular Emperor of the Byzantine Empire, and Grand Master of the Imperial Order in question, and to whom is heir-apparent his eldest son, The Prince Demetrius Rhodocanakis (Born 3 December, 1840).

These titular distinctions, being also hereditary, are duly recognised; and the Princes of this House, in all their official transactions, as well as in ordinary intercourse with Governmental authorities throughout Europe, are invariably distinguished by the Imperial prefix to their names and style. These passing observations are partly necessary, where the public ear has been so often abused, by the sinister efforts of certain parties, at various times, to appropriate the rights of this family.

The Constantinian Order of St. George, is asserted by most, if not by all writers on the subject, to have been instituted in the year A.D. 312, by the Emperor Constantine the Great, for the protection and preservation of the celebrated sacred standard, the 'Labarum;' but the earliest Statutes of the Order known, are those promulgated in the year A.D. 1192, by the Emperor Isaac II. Angelus.

Were it the purpose of these remarks, to enter into all the details of the constitution of this Order, and to trace the succession of Grand Masters, from Constantine the Great, their reputed original; the earlier dislocations, and reconnections of dynasties, in the Imperial line, might be genealogically explained; but it is more convenient to confine ourselves, at present, to the Order, as remodelled, or even instituted, by the Emperor Isaac Angelus, leaving each reader to determine for himself, the true value of such information as is open to everyone. All that bears upon this point, in the Statutes themselves, is as follows:—

¹ Greek style.

'Having this in view day and night, We (Isaac Angelus) observed with deep sorrow of soul, the decline and languor, into which the greatest and most renowned institution of the State—the Most Holy, Most Noble, and Most Illustrious Order of St. George, founded by our ancestor and predecessor, Constantine the Great, has fallen.'

The fair and reasonable assumption here, is, that the Emperor would never have used such expressions, without the fullest justification, exposed as he was, to contemporary critics, all more or less cognisant of current events, and who had ample means of refuting any manifestly unfaithful and untrustworthy reference to the then declining organisation of the members of the Order—for it evidently had *even then* members, otherwise the qualifying terms used, would have been unnecessary. At the same time, it must be left to be inferred, whether the selected band appointed to guard the 'Labarum,' originally represented a strictly chivalric Order of Knighthood, or whether its original constitution, did not gradually conform to the change of the times, until, at a period much later than the fourth century, and yet considerably anterior to the date of the published statutes, it had, perhaps, almost imperceptibly, merged from the classic into the chivalric type—developing itself from a cognate principle, rather than sustaining an original and fully organised character.

Under any circumstances, however, we need not pause longer to discuss this point, for no earlier statutes of any Order than those of A.D. 1192 have reached us; and although there are records, of a prior date, pertaining to the distinctive *Religious* Military bodies corporate, subject to monastic rule,¹ the constitution of these latter fraternities, was so essentially dissimilar to that of the Orders of Honorary Knighthood, as to form a separate class, in the general system; and therefore it can scarcely be denied that, taking the *date* of its statutes as the legal test of antiquity, on purely historical grounds, this Imperial Order must be considered the *premier of*

¹ Some writers *erroneously* ascribe to the Byzantine Order the pale of St. Basil.

Christendom. But if a looser interpretation were advisable, even then there is no other Order of Chivalry that can trace its course, through that earlier social *metamorphic* period, to the not however 'speechless'¹ though remote past, of the Constantinian epoch; and between the fifty Christian champions that rallied round the Labarum, and the Chivalric Knights of Isaac Angelus, there was probably a difference only, as it were, in *degree* and not in *kind*.

The advantage of arbitrarily confining the origin of this Order to the twelfth century is this, that it cuts off the pretexts of tradition, by which comparatively modern Orders, like those of 'The Dannebrog,' and 'The Thistle,' might claim an almost coeval, although entirely apochryphal foundation.

By the second article of the Statutes of the Emperor Isaac Angelus, it is decreed, that 'the lawful Emperor alone of the Roman Empire, his heirs and successors to the throne, shall be, for evermore, the sovereigns of this Most Holy, Most Noble, and Most Illustrious Order of Knighthood; and that he alone shall have the power of creating, of degrading, and of restoring its members, of reforming its statutes, and of judging all differences arising between knights of all degrees.'

The founder, or the sovereign, by restricting the Grandmastership of an Order to his heirs and successors, would scarcely provide for the contingency of an alien race of princes, while any of the original dynasty existed. But in the nature of things, a revolution might give to an usurper the opportunity of interpreting, to his own advantage, the meaning of the term 'successors;' and while such a contingency was overlooked by Henry III. of France,² at a still later period, a similar error was obviated, by a special clause in the Statutes of the Orders of St. Michael and St. George, of the Ionian Isles.

The Byzantine Princes seem to have, even when usurpers, striven to perfect their power by a family alliance, whereby hereditary claims might be transmitted on the mothers' side; and, indeed, nearly all claimed a descent from the Flavian family, which, of course, they had not.

¹ Palgrave.

² In the Order of the Holy Ghost, 1578.

As for the competency to sell a family, or dynastic Order—which, however, that of the Byzantine Empire was *not*—such a power would be incompatible with the nature of an heir-loom. The Grand Master might indeed, by a private arrangement, virtually dispose of the *life-rent*, as it were, of his dignity; but no such act would have the effect of disqualifying the natural heirs, nor could the former alienate *that*, of which blood affinity is the essential quality—as, in like manner, no man can by his own public advertisement relieve himself of a legal obligation.

It was the practice, when two Emperors reigned conjointly, as colleagues, that the Grand Mastership of the Byzantine Order was invariably vested in the senior; and, in the case of a female sovereign, it appertained to her alone, but was conveyed, *jure uxoris*, to the consort, whom she might elevate to the honours of the purple.¹ And again, in the case of a divided succession, the dignity devolved on him to whose lot fell the Imperial capital—thus indicating a *local*, and, to some extent, a *dynastic* requirement in its possessor.

But the *tenure* alone of the capital was not sufficient; for when the French Crusaders became Masters of Constantinople, and usurped the purple in 1204, the fugitive Byzantine nobility proceeded to Nicaea, where they formed a court, and acknowledged as their Emperor Theodore Lascaris, who thereupon became Grand Master of the National Order; while the Latin rival sovereign, on the other hand, never assumed that dignity.

From 1204 until their restoration in 1260, the Greeks, under their own emperors and patriarchs, remained at Nicaea.

From this period the Grand Mastership was transmitted by Michael (VIII.) Palaeologus, through a regular succession, to Constantine (XIII.) Palaeologus; and on the death of the latter, and the subversion of the Empire by the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Grand Mastership devolved on his brother, Thomas Palaeologus, who thus became the depositary of all the hereditary and titular

¹ The Empress Zoe, for instance.

honours of the Byzantine Empire; and, as it were, through that tragic event, the preferential guardian of the Imperial inheritance, although, in point of *Imperial* descents, the House of Ducas-Rhodocanakis might have demanded an equal recognition, had not the catastrophe in question seemed to obliterate such rivalries, and to leave the honour, as it were, of chief mourner, to the *last dynasty in actual possession*.

From Thomas, the first titular and hereditary Emperor, after the fall of the Empire, these dignities descended, in a male succession, to Theodore the Sixth and last titular prince of *his house*, who died in England in the year 1636, leaving by his first and *only lawful wife*, according to the tenets of the Greek Church and the laws of the Empire,² a daughter, and ultimately sole heiress, who, by her marriage with her cousin Prince Demetrius Rhodocanakis, of the Island of Chios, conveyed to their posterity the inheritance of her father, and at the same time, by the said alliance, united to that of Palaeologus the equally Imperial House of Ducas, which her husband represented.³

¹ See *Notes and Queries*, 3rd ser. vii. pp. 403, 506, and xii. p. 30, &c.

² The law of the Byzantine Empire required equal alliances in the princely houses, just as the Royal Marriage Act of England renders illegal the marriage of a prince of the blood royal with a subject.

³ The family of Rhodocanakis are the direct lineal male representatives of the family of Ducas, the most ancient and illustrious of the Byzantine Empire. We may commence the pedigree with Flavius Entropius, who married Claudia,—only daughter of Crispus, the younger brother of the Roman Emperors, Marcus Aurelius Claudius II. (R. A.D. 268 to 270), and of Marcus Aurelius Claudius Quintillus (R. 270 to 270), by whom he had two sons, Flavius Valerius Constantius, surnamed Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great, and Flavius Claudius Constantinus, which latter by his wife Julia Helena Theodora was father of Constantinus surnamed Ducas, from the rank of Duke of Constantinople which he received, A.D. 335, from his first cousin in male descent, Constantine the Great, as the following paragraph testifies:—

‘Si quis enim replicare annales, et sursum niti versus origines rerum curet, sic reperiet Ducarum gentem e Constantini Magni domo propagatam; author siquidem huius nominis, qui socium se Constantino Magno adiunxit e Roma vetera in novam migranti proxima illi consanguinitate admotus fuisse dicitur, utpote patruelis eius, cuius praeter caeteram virtutem, commendatione necessitudinis, dignitas Ducis Constantinopoleos illi collata est, ex qua in totam familiam Ducarum appellatio hunc usque in diem est propagata,’ &c. (*Vide* Nicephori Caesaris Bryennii *Commentarii de Rebus Byzantinis*. Parisiis, 1661, in folio, page 8–9). This Constantinus Ducas of the 4th century was the direct ancestor of Andronicus Ducas, the Protovestiarius, and father by his wife, Anna Dalassena, of Constantinus Ducas and his brother Nicephorus Ducas (b. A.D. 869, m. 890, d. 929), who became the founder of the Royal and Imperial House of Rhodocanaki, and was Duke or Governor of the Island of Rhodes during the reign of the Emperor Leo VI., and of his brother Alexander (A.D. 886 to 915).

After the death of the last-named Emperor



Copper Coin struck during the reign (AD. 914-929)
of Nicephorus Ducas Rhodocanakis.
first King of the Island of Rhodes and
founder of the Royal and Imperial
House of Rhodocanakis, in the
possession of His Holiness
Pope Pius IX.

A reference to the works of the Byzantine Historians, &c., as well as the pedigree of this House, already published and in MS., will explain its alliances more fully than space permits in these pages.

in 913, the elder brother, Constantinus Ducas, who was Magnus Domesticus, and defended for many years the Asiatic frontiers of the Empire, was invited by the principal inhabitants of Constantinople, headed by the Patriarch Nicholas, to come to that capital and seize the Crown, which Constantinus VII., Porphyrogenitus, then a child of seven years, was unable to hold. Constantinus came in haste, accompanied by his son Gregoras, his nephew Michael, and his principal officers, entered the city at night by a postern gate, assembled his followers in the house of his father-in-law, Nicholas Iberitzes, and before day-break at the head of them, and of the populace, bearing lighted torches and proclaiming him Emperor, presented himself at the gates of the Circus; repulsed on this side he enforced the gate Chalke, and penetrated the interior Court of the Palace. John Elladas, one of the seven tutors or guardians of Constantine VII. (whose only surviving descendant, Anna, married in 1668, The Prince Panteleon Rhodocanakis), was here commanding a company of household troops. A fight takes place, the horse of Constantinus slips on the pavement, and a soldier cuts off the head of Constantinus and carries it to the Emperor.

Nicephorus Ducas having learned the death of his elder brother, and of his own eldest son Michael, with a host of his relatives; and at the same time that his interests at Constantinople were assailed by the Tutors, who plundered his estate and procured his deprivation of the title of Magister, he revolted, gained over the troops under his command, and assuming the title and habiliments of Emperor, crossed over into Bulgaria to assert his claims. He refused the offers of the Emperor's Tutors, and assisted by his friend, Simeon, King of Bulgaria, besieged Constantinople. That capital again owed its salvation to its high walls, the numerous machines of war which defended them, and the bravery of the garrison.

Nicephorus, despairing to take it either by assault or by famine, accepted the proposal of

the Tutors to come to terms. He received the high and invidious title of *Vasileus*, or King of the Island of Rhodes, for himself and his descendants, with permission to coin money with his effigy, &c., &c. A few days after this, Simeon, King of Bulgaria (R. 888-927), departed, and Nicephorus left for his new kingdom, both laden with presents and honours.

On his return to Rhodes, Nicephorus Ducas, in order to distinguish himself from the other branches of his family, added after his family name that of RHODOCANAKIS; a composition of the words *Rhodoc* and *Anaks*, King of Rhodes. (*Rhodoc-anaks*, *Rhodocanaks*, *Rhodoc-anakis*), and to his escutcheon (which was *Azure*, a cross *Argent*), added the insignia granted in A.D. 538 to the Isle of Rhodes by the Emperor Justinian the Great, *Azure*, an inverted imperial diadem *Proper*, containing roses *Argent*, and surmounted by an oval circle of six stars *Or*.

It may be mentioned that the elder branch of the House of Ducas is now extinct. From the *second* branch of the Ducas family descend the Kings and Emperors, who, as above, assumed the name of Rhodocanakis, and who are too numerous to mention in this *résumé*: and from the third and last (now extinct) the Emperors who assumed the name of Vatatzes and later also that of Lascaris.

The title of *Royal Highness* was always prefixed to the titles and names of the various members, male or female, of the Rhodocanakian House down to the year 1636, when (by the death of His Imperial Highness Prince Theodorus Palaeologus (b. 1573, m. 1593), sixth Hereditary Emperor (Theodorus IV.) of the Byzantine Empire, being the great-great-grandson of Thomas Palaeologus, Porphyrogenitus, Despot of Achaia, and brother and heir to Constantinus XIII., Palaeologus, last Emperor of Constantinople), his title, rights, and claims were inherited as a matter of course by his only child and heiress, Theodora Palaeologina (b.

As it was with the Latin Emperors, so is it with the Turkish Sultans—neither, under the statutes of Isaac Angelus, could be regarded as eligible for the dignity of Grand Master, of the Constantinian Order of St. George. Neither inherited the throne lawfully, and neither were *accepted by the native race*. Moreover, in either case, the difference of religion and of creed was an insuperable objection, and would even have neutralised any advantages derived from family alliance, since, as

1594, m. 1614, d. 1665), the wife of His Royal Highness Prince Demetrius Rhodocanakis (b. 1592, m. 1614, d. 1664), from whom the present Prince Joannes is fifth in lineal descent. This branch, by way of distinguishing themselves from the younger branches of their house, dropped the title of Royal Highness, and assumed instead that of *Imperial Highness*, for which reason this family is described in some historical works as 'Royal,' in others 'Imperial,' and sometimes with both appellations, its head being the hereditary Emperor of the Byzantine Empire.

It may be mentioned that in the House of Rhodocanakis, as must be well known to those of our readers who are more or less familiar with the long annals of the Byzantine Empire, are at the present moment represented not only nearly all the extinct historical and once powerful families of the Byzantine Empire, on which throne they sat for generations—the Ducas, Phocas, Lacapenos, Comnenos, Botaniates, Argyros, Angelos, Bryennios, Palaeologos, Vatatzes, Lascaris, Cantacuzinos, &c.,—with whom that House were allied over and over again, while reigning, for centuries—but also those who reigned over the ancient kingdoms of Armenia, Iberia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Albania, Hungary, &c. Space will not allow of more than a brief historical sketch of this House, so memorable for its vicissitudes, and we must therefore simply confine ourselves to a mention of some of the illustrious European families, representatives of some of which still exist, and which are of the same blood—viz. the Kings of France, the Grand Dukes of Muscovy (now Emperors of Russia), the Counts, and afterwards, Dukes of Savoy (now Kings of Italy), the Dukes of Austria (now Emperors of Austria

and Kings of Hungary), the Dukes of Brunswick, the Marquises of Montferrat (extinct), the Norman Kings of the Two Sicilies (extinct), the Princes of Antiochia, the Counts of Sultzpachen, in Bavaria; and in more modern times (fifteenth to nineteenth centuries), those of the Princes or Dukes—Crispi, Sommeriva, Venieri, Ghizi, Koressi, Sforza, Doria, D'Este, Borgia, Caraffa, Corsini, Borghesi, Pignatelli, Giustiniani, Aldobrandini, Ursini, Grimaldi, Pico della Mirandula, Piccolomini, San Severino, de Coronis, Foscari, de Gozadini, Visconti, Gonzaga, Farnesi, Spinola, Colonna, Strozzi, de Lusignan, Massimo, Mallea, Malaspina, Rospigliosi, Santa-Croce, Barberini, Albani, Barberigo, Villamarini, Scala, Nigri, Frangipani, Moresini, Nani, Odescalchi, Acciaïoli, Bandini, Spada, Biscia, Cicala, Bellani, Cibo, Fieschi, Rubei, Strada, Malipiero, Spartali, Faliero, Contarini, Grimani, Foscolo, Loredano, Dandolo, Cornaro, Memo, Delfin, Medici, Mocenigo, Mauruzi, Soutso, Mavrokordato, Notara, Ypsilanti, Axelo, &c.

This family, as we are instructed by history, have suffered from time to time much personally and in fortune in their efforts to restore the Byzantine Empire; especially in the horrible massacre in the Isle of Chio by the Turks in 1822. The latter place was the refuge of the family at the destruction of Constantinople in 1453, and here they remained up to the time of the massacre, when the greater portion of them were slain, and the survivors scattered over the world.

See also *Freemasons' Magazine and Masonic Mirror*, Aug. 28, Oct. 30, Nov. 13, Dec. 4, 1869, &c. &c., and John Yarker, Jun.'s *History of the Order of the Temple* (Manchester, 1869, in 8vo.), p. 31.

regards the former rulers, the Statutes of the Order are based on the tenets of the Greek Church.

Between the jealousy of the Latin Church and the exterminating spirit of the Turkish Government, the survivors of the Imperial family have ever been subjected to peculiar disabilities ; and the fact that, unlike some fallen dynasties, which have succumbed to intestine convulsions, *this*, on the contrary, *never* lost the suffrages of the people, but fell before a foreign invader (an alien in race and religion, who found a passive accessory to his spoliation, in a Church that had long resented the independence of the Byzantine Court), raises a hope, from the present more enlightened spirit of Christian Europe, that although its power has passed away, this family may cease to be disturbed, in the possession of those relics of the Imperial throne, which seem to have tempted the cupidity of the Papal Court, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in a very remarkable degree, as we have already seen.

In conclusion, as the Abbé Giustiniani's spurious list of Grand Masters, of the Imperial Constantinian Order of St. George has had an extensive circulation, it may be advisable to add to the present statement, a genuine list of the Grand Masters, as transmitted in the family of the present representative, and amply confirmed by early, as well as later historians.

Accepting the epoch of the promulgation of the Statutes of the Order, as the most critically convenient starting-point, we have

GRAND MASTERS.

| | | | | | A.D. | A.D. |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|
| ISAACIUS II. ANGELUS | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1185 | 1195 |
| ALEXIUS III. ANGELUS COMNENUS | | ... | | ... | 1195 | 1203 |
| ISAACIUS II. ANGELUS (restored) | ... | | ... | ... | 1203 | 1204 |
| NICOLAUS CANAVOS | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1204 | 1204 |
| ALEXIUS V. DUCAS | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1204 | 1204 |
| THEODORUS LASCARIS | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1204 | 1222 |
| JOANNES III. DUCAS VATATZES | ... | | ... | ... | 1222 | 1255 |

| | | |
|--|--------|------------------------|
| THEODORUS II. DUCAS VATATZES LASCARIS | ... | 1255—1259 |
| JOANNES IV. DUCAS VATATZES LASCARIS | ... .. | 1259—1260 |
| MICHAEL VIII. DUCAS ANGELUS COMNENUS PALAEOLOGUS | | 1260—1282 |
| ANDRONICUS II. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1282—1328 |
| ANDRONICUS III. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1328—1341 |
| JOANNES V. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1341—1391 |
| JOANNES VI. ANGELUS COMNENUS PALAEOLOGUS CANTA- CUZENUS | ... .. | 1341—1357 |
| MANUEL II. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1391—1423 |
| JOANNES VIII. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1423—1448 |
| CONSTANTINUS XIII. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1448—1453 |
| THOMASUS DUCAS ANGELUS COMNENUS PALAEOLOGUS | ... | 1453—1465 |
| JOANNES IX. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1465—1498 |
| THEODORUS III. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1498—1540 |
| PROSPERUS PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1540—1573 |
| CAMILLUS PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1573—1598 |
| THEODORUS IV. PALAEOLOGUS | ... .. | 1598—1636 |
| THEODORA II. PALAEOLOGINA-RHODOCANAKI | ... .. | 1636—1665 |
| PANTELEON DUCAS ANGELUS COMNENUS PALAEOLOGUS RHODOCANAKIS | ... .. | 1665—1689 |
| FRANCISCUS RHODOCANAKIS | ... .. | 1689—1735 |
| MANUEL III. RHODOCANAKIS | ... .. | 1735—1799 |
| DEMETRIUS RHODOCANAKIS | ... .. | 1799—1814 |
| FRANCISCUS RHODOCANAKIS | ... .. | 1814—1854 |
| THOMASUS II. RHODOCANAKIS | ... .. | 1854—1863 |
| JOANNES X. DUCAS ANGELUS COMNENUS PALAEOLOGUS RHODOCANAKIS ¹ | ... .. | 1863—(<i>vivens</i>) |

. Nec Jovis ira, nec ignis,
Nec potuit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas.

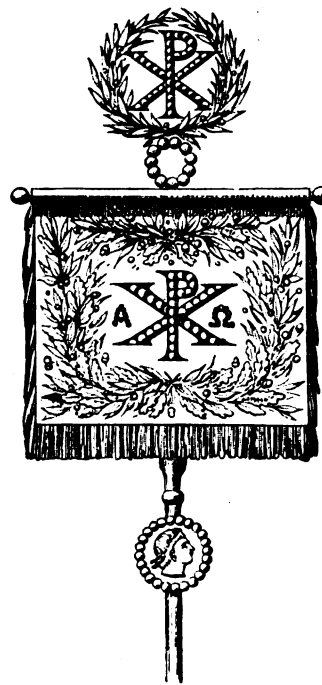
OVID, *Metamorphoseon* lib. xv. 871.

¹ Whose eldest son and heir-apparent became a British subject by letters of naturalization dated December 24, 1867. See also Report of Naturalized Aliens, printed by order of the House of Commons (July 7, 1868), p. 18:— 'Prince Demetrius Rhodocanakis.'

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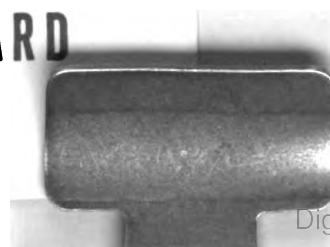
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